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October 26, 2006

The Honorable Kevin Martin
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
Room 8-B201
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C 20554

Dear Chairman Martin:

Thank you for your letter of September 7 regarding the Commission's comprehensive review of media ownership rules. I appreciate the difficulty of the Commission's task in balancing competitive marketplace realities with the public interest goals of localism and diversity.

I agree that public input is integral to the process, and note that the Commission is planning six public hearings around the country on the broad topics of localism and media ownership. I am writing to recommend Maine as an ideal site for one of your hearings. Maine is a largely rural state with several small- to mid-sized media markets, and which borders the large Boston media market to the south. Our State is representative of the demographics of rest of northern New England. Changes to the rules on newspaper/television cross ownership could have a significant impact on Maine, as discussed in a recent study by the McGannon Communications Research Center

Portland, Maine, was one of the sites selected for a public hearing as part of former Chairman Powell's Localism Task Force. The hearing was scheduled for May 2004, but I understand that it did not occur. Many of my constituents who were planning to share their views with the Commission at that hearing would appreciate an opportunity to do so during the Commission's current review.

I appreciate your efforts to solicit public input for the Commission's proceeding on media ownership rules. Once again, I urge you to consider Maine as a suitable site for one of the public hearings on this issue.

Sincerely,

Tom Allen
Member of Congress